

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (currently amended). A cover for closing a top opening of defined inside dimensions of a thermite reaction chamber of a crucible, the cover including for this purpose a bottom peripheral edge suitable for bearing against a top peripheral edge defining said top opening, said cover being substantially continuous and said bottom edge having secured thereto a filter lining that is annular, substantially continuous, and suitable for constituting a substantially continuous contact medium between said bottom edge and said top edge, the cover being sufficiently heavy to be able solely under gravity to withstand any gas pressure that might develop inside said chamber during a thermite reaction, the cover having a weight heavy enough to prevent dislodgement in response to the pressures developed during a thermite reaction, and light enough to enable the filter lining to allow gases developed in the thermite reaction to escape from the thermite reaction chamber while retaining dust and projected particles.

2 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 1, wherein said filter lining is compressible.

3 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 2, wherein said filter lining is made of a fiber material selected from the group comprising felts of vitreous synthetic fibers.

4 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 1, said top edge being substantially plane, and said bottom edge being substantially plane.

5 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 1, comprising a continuous peripheral rim bordering said bottom edge inside said filter lining and projecting downwards relative thereto, said rim presenting outside dimensions that are smaller than said inside dimensions so as to be suitable for engaging with clearance in said opening.

6 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 5, wherein the filter lining has inside dimensions that are greater than said outside dimensions so as to leave annular clearance between said rim and the filter lining.

7 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 8, comprising localized centering means for centering the filter lining relative to said rim so as to ensure that said annular clearance exists.

8 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 4, comprising a continuous peripheral rim bordering said bottom edge inside said filter lining and projecting downwards relative thereto, said rim presenting outside dimensions that are smaller than said inside dimensions so as to be suitable for engaging with clearance in said opening;

in that the filter lining presents inside dimensions that are greater than said outside dimensions so as to leave annular clearance between said rim and the filter lining;

in that said bottom edge presents blind cavities that are circumferentially localized and circumferentially distributed, facing which the contact between said bottom edge on said filter lining is locally interrupted, and in that said cavities communicate with said annular clearance, but are closed going away from said rim by the bottom edge of the cover making contact with the filter lining.

9 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 1, generally in the shape of a pot, defining internally a cavity set back upwards relative to said bottom edge.

10 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 1, generally in the form of a body of revolution.

11 (previously presented). A cover according to claim 1, adapted for single use, said cover being made of a material comprising sand agglomerated by a binder, said material being easily destroyed after use.